

sports

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■ WOSSAA NORDIC SKIING

Seven athletes qualify for OFSAA

CORY SMITH
Sentinel-Review

THAMESFORD — Seven skiers advanced to the provincial high school Nordic skiing championships after qualifying yesterday at WOSSAA.

Junior girls led the way, as Marissa Ukos of Huron Park earned her second straight trip to OFSAA after finishing fourth on the course at Windy Hill Farm, north of Thamesford.

"I just had a lot of fun last year and I enjoy it, so I just want to go and have some fun and just finish the race," she said. "I want to try my hardest and maybe aim for a top 50 finish and just represent my school."

Hannah Kruger of Ingersoll placed eighth, while Blue Bomber teammate Michelle Harrison was 11th. WCI's Leslie Galloway finished 13th to complete the junior girl qualifiers.

Huron Park finished third in the team scores, edging Ingersoll by one point.

Laura Alexander (16th), Natalie Geerlinks (18th), Susannah Sparling (27th), Stephanie Shepherd (29th), Charlie Bates (31st) and Sarah Gauthier (36th) were the other Huron Park skiers who helped the Huskies earn bronze.

Rachel DeBoer (23rd) and Natalie VanOostveen (24th) nearly pushed the Blue Bombers onto the podium.

In junior boys, Huron Park's



ELLIOT FERGUSON Sentinel-Review

High school skiers leave the start line during Tuesday's WOSSAA Nordic skiing championships at Windy Hill Farm in Zorra.

Will Chesney (12th) and Mike Thompson (14th) both qualified for OFSAA. Michael MacKenzie and Evert Kehew of WCI placed 22nd and 23rd, respectively. Jon

Wilson and Derek Groat (IDCI), Ian Mackenzie (WCI), and Darren Holden (Huron Park) continue to improve as first-year skiers.

In senior girls, Ingersoll's Emily Kruger qualified for her fourth OFSAA appearance after finishing 10th.

"I don't really set expecta-

tions," she said. "I'm just hoping mostly to have a good time. You really can't go any farther than OFSAA, so just have a good ski I guess. That's all I really want

to do."

The IDCI team was fifth, with Melinda Lee Leblanc (22nd), Becca Shaw (25th), Tori Roy (26th), Heather Griffith (29th) and Nicole Lansdel (34th). Huron Park was led by Brittany Chesney, who placed 19th and missed out on qualifying by two places and 30 seconds after hitting trees on two occasions. Sarah Giles was 36th, and new skier Jessica Lee was 39th.

“I just had a lot of fun last year and I enjoy it, so I just want to go and have some fun and just finish the race.”

Marissa Ukos

Only two senior boys competed. Both were from Ingersoll. Briar Fitzmorris battled a head cold and finished 21st, while first-year senior Weston Blacklock finished 26th.

About 175 skiers from Huron Perth and Oxford competed at WOSSAA, hosted by St. Marys DCEI. The top six individuals not on a qualifying team advanced to OFSAA, which is scheduled for early March at the Nakkertok Ski Club, in Gatineau, Que.

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